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NATIONAL REGISTER LISTED

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property							
Historic name Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail Other name/site number							
2. Location							
Street & number 5.12 miles south of Seneca, KS on Hwy 63 City or town Seneca			not for publication vicinity				
State Kansas Code K	S County Nemaha	Code 131	Zip code 66538				
3. State/Federal Agency Certif	ication ·						
request for determination of Historic Places and meets the meets does not meet the nationally statewide. Patrick Zollner, Deputy State Kansas State Historical State or Federal agency and In my opinion, the property Comments.) Signature of commenting official	bureau meets ☐ does not meet the N al /Title	ation standards for registr puirements set forth in 36 ecommend that this prop sheet for additional com Date	ering properties in the Natio CFR Part 60. In my opinior erty be considered significar ments.)	onal Register of n, the property nt			
State or Federal agency and b	ureau						
4. National Park Service Certif	ication						
	ster.	ignature of the Keeper		Date of Action			
See continuation she determined eligible for the N Register See continuation she determined not eligible for th National Register removed from the National Register other, (explain:)	et.						

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail		Nemaha County, Kansas			
Name of Property		County and State			
5. Classification					
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)			
☐ private ☐ public-local ☑ public-State ☐ public-Federal	☐ building(s) ☐ district ☐ site ☐ structure ☑ object	Contributing	Noncontributing buildings sites structures objects		
		216	total		
Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)		Number of contribu	Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register		
New Deal - Era Resources of Kan	sas		0		
6. Function or Use					
Historic Functions (Enter Categories from instructions) Transportation/Road related (vehi	cular)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instruct Transportation/Road re			
7. Description					
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)		Materials (Enter categories from instructions)			
Other: Park Rustic		Foundation: Stone: limestone Walls:			
		Roof:			
		Other: Concrete			

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail	Nemaha County, Kansas		
Name of Property	County and State		
8. Statement of Significance			
Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions) Architecture		
A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history	Social History		
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.	Government		
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.	Period of Significance		
D Property has yielded, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	1937		
Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)	Significant Dates		
Property is:	1937		
A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.			
B removed from it original location.	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)		
C a birthplace or grave.	N/A		
D a cemetery.	N/A		
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	Cultural Affiliation		
F a commemorative property.	N/A		
☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years			
	Architect/Builder		
Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)	Civilian Conservation Corps (Company 2735)		
9. Major Bibliographical References			
Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on	one or more continuation sheets.)		
Previous documentation on file (NPS): preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey recorded by Historic American Engineering	Primary location of additional data: State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other Name of repository: Nemaha County Historical Museum		
Record #			

Lake Nemaha Dan	n Guardrail		Nemaha County, Kansas	
Name of Property			County and State	
10. Geographical D	ata			
Acreage of Property	less than one acre			
Zone Easting 2 1 4 7 5 Zone Easting 2 1 4 7 5 Verbal Boundary Describe the boundaries Boundary Justification	Northing Northing 3 7 3 5 4 4 0 6 5 7 6 ription s of the property on a continuation sheet.)	Zone 4 See con	To be a second of the second o	
11. Form Prepared B	y			
Name/title Organization Street & number	DarlAnn and Dean Rial, Grant Writers Nemaha County Historical Society 906 North 8th	DateJ Telephone	une 1, 2007 	
City or town	Seneca, KS 66538	State KS	Zip code66538	
A sketch map for Photographs	with the completed form: 5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's line historic districts and properties having large action and white photographs of the property.		ous resources.	
Name Kansas Department of Transportation / Secretary Deb Miller				
Street & number				
City or town _	Topeka	_ State _	KS Zip code <u>66603-3754</u>	

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16) U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 7 Page 1

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail Seneca vicinity, Nemaha County, Kansas

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Lake Nemaha is located 5.12 miles south of Seneca, Nemaha County, in northeast Kansas on Kansas Highway 63 on the South Fork of the Nemaha River between 111th and 112th Road. A modern bridge, Kansas Bridge #33, built in 1984, crosses the spillway of Lake Nemaha on Kansas Highway 63. Crossing the dam, the north approach to Bridge #33 features a unique guardrail that was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937. The guardrail consists of 215 posts or pillars of quarried stone capped with three-foot square concrete blocks on the west side of the highway, and a single continuous stone parapet wall on the east side of the highway – for a total of 216 objects. The highway curves slightly in keeping with the curvature of the dam.

The guardrails consist of stone pillars varying in heights from 38 inches to 50 inches, depending on the elevation of the ground. The concrete caps on all 215 pillars are 3 feet by 3 feet, running parallel along both sides of the highway from north to south. The posts on the west side are generally set seven feet apart. The east side approach posts are 17 feet apart and are set within a quarried stone wall. The concrete cap on this stone wall railing is 2 feet across and 3½ inches thick. The stone wall is 37 inches high, while the pillars are 49½ inch tall pillars spaced at 17 foot intervals. The concrete mortar is made with fine-grained sand, but has started to deteriorate between the stones.

The guardrail is reflective of the rustic park architecture common to New Deal-era parks. While the construction of the entire park and lake can attributed to area CCC workers, the guardrail structure is the most intact example of their work at Nemaha Lake.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 2

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail Seneca vicinity, Nemaha County, Kansas

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail (c. 1937) is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its historical association with the New Deal and the Civilian Conservation Corps. This recreational resource is a result of government work programs of the New Deal-era. The property is also being nominated under Criterion C as a good local example of rustic park architecture common in recreational resources of the 1930s. This nomination is part of the "New Deal-era Resources of Kansas" Multiple Property Submission.

Nemaha Lake History and New Deal Historical Context

By the 1930s, public attention was focused on the economic miseries of the country as it skidded into the Great Depression. Northeast Kansas shared with its neighbors in the region a disaster brought on by a drought that ruined farmers, produced the Dust Bowl, and caused high unemployment numbers.

To battle unemployment and economic hardship in America, President Franklin Roosevelt formed the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Reforestation Relief Act of March 31, 1933. Created to employ young men between the ages of 17 and 23, it remained a federal agency until June 30, 1943. Existing federal agencies oversaw the program's operation. Candidates applied to and were selected by the Department of Labor. The Department of War provided medical exams, assigned participants to companies, and clothed and equipped them. The departments of Interior and Agriculture supervised work projects on federal lands. Projects on state and private lands, as well as those in national forests, fell under the direction of the Forest Service. Many young men and military veterans joined this group. In Kansas there were 52 divisions of the CCC working on projects, with 3 eventually working on the Lake Nemaha project.

Before construction began on Lake Nemaha in 1934 as a federal flood control project in a fertile agricultural district entirely devoid of parks and water areas for outdoor recreation, the Park & Water Resources Committee for the City of Seneca and County of Nemaha, advanced by the semi-weekly newspaper, the Courier-Tribune of Seneca and its publishers, began a campaign to ask people to support \$30,000 in bonds to buy right-of-way to 640 acres. In a time of dire financial stress and great controversy, the successful election brought fulfillment of a project of 500 acres supported by the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission, the Kansas State Highway Department, the United Department of Agriculture, including the Forestry service, the United States Army, through the United States CCC. ²

¹ Elizabeth Rosin, et. al., <u>New Deal-era Resources of Kansas</u>. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. 2002. Filed at the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

² George C. and Dora Adriance, <u>Community Service Application</u>, National Newspaper Editorial Association, 1934, p 2.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 3

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail Seneca vicinity, Nemaha County, Kansas

Early in planning the project, the county learned it would be difficult to interest the Federal Government in a proposition to build the lake for purposes of flood control. The project was not large enough to come within the government's plans, nevertheless, it remained a fact that the reservoir did have an important bearing on floods from nearby Kampler to the state line, and along branch streams like Tennessee Creek, Illinois Creek, Fisher Creek, Deer Creek and Turkey Creek. This angle of the proposal had great importance to farmers whose lands were within the basins of those streams.³

The planners sold the project by promoting the fact that many other communities were building lakes. Hiawatha had constructed a small lake, Holton voted one down, Nemaha County residents were planning one, Sabetha had blue prints for one. It seemed there was hardly a county in Kansas that didn't start a lake project in hopes that the Federal government would establish a CCC camp to furnish labor, the state highway commission would contribute a proportion of the cost that it normally would spend to build a fill and bridge, and the fish and game department would use funds that it expected to acquire from the pubic works administration.

This project was not possible without the government CCC camp. Each man's labor was worth \$1 a day, the government's allotment for labor on this project figured more than \$50,000 a year. This was promoted as a two-year program at Kampler Station. ⁵

When the Federal Government approved a CCC camp in Nemaha County by August 1st, the decision caught both the Fish and Game Commission and the county commissioners unaware. Camps really were not expected before October 1. But the government moved swiftly for camps in drought-stricken areas, which gave the Fish and Game Commission little time to complete its survey at Kampler. Lacking the survey and definition of the park boundaries, the county commissioners were not in a position to know what lands to buy or condemn. The Associated Press carried an announcement that the Nemaha County drought relief camp would open on August 1, 1934. After a long consultation with the attorneys, it was agreed that the county should get title to the land from local landowners, and then move the camp in. ⁶

The first camp of youths of the Civilian Conservation Corps assigned to Nemaha County for the purpose of building a lake park arrived on Monday, October 6, 1934. Composed of 175 men in Company 2735, it was commanded by Captain C. M. Spencer and Lieut. Robert P. Aikman. The medical officer was

³George C. Adriance, <u>Courier-Tribune</u>, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, "Renewed Hope For The Lake." January 15, 1934.

⁴ George C. Adriance, <u>Courier-Tribune</u>, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, "Many projects are Contemplated." March 19, 1934. ⁵ George C. Adriance, <u>Courier-Tribune</u>, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, "Facts about the State Lake Project." March 22, 1934.

⁶ George C. Adriance, Courier-Tribune, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, "Keep Horse Before Cart." July 16, 1934.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 4

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail Seneca vicinity, Nemaha County, Kansas

Lieutenant Donald R. Alverson. Work was started under the supervisory of Forester Pinartz and eight civilian engineers.⁷

A second camp was set up to move dirt, cut trees, run equipment, and pour footings for the dam, buildings and bridge bringing another 141 men and 3 officers to Seneca in late November 1942. Company 1797 Civilian Conservation Corps arrived from Deer River, Minnesota. Like Camp No. 2735, the second camp was composed almost entirely of Kansans. The total CCC strength at the camp was now 334 men with 30 local experienced men and 25 recruits added, each company numbered 195.8

The Seneca Community Legionnaires sponsored a benefit dance and football game under the floodlights to raise money to purchase paint for the CCC-constructed lake buildings. The game was between the Nemaha CCC workers and the Pawnee CCC camp. CCC workers were dealt a setback when United Power and Light Corporation declined to build a \$2,000 transmission line from the Kelly corner to the CCC campsite. In declining to give the service, United Power and Light expressed the view the park was within six miles of Seneca and that it should not encroach on Seneca territory. 10

Also, a shortage of materials plagued the construction crews, but three-mule hitch teams dragged logs from the timber cuttings to the old right-of-way of the Northwestern Railroad on higher ground. A tractor dragged logs from the west slopes to the bluff-land. The workers made a dent in the low land timber and estimated that 200 acres would be cleared. Slabs from the sawmill were used to build log cabins, a public picnic grounds, water line ditches were used to bring water over the hill to the forestry shop and location of the mule barn.¹¹

The Reverend Harry A. Weed, who served as welcoming spokesman to the Chamber's special dinner guests, army officers, and foresters for the CCC camp said on November 12, 1942, "We are happy for the tolerance of this community which permits men of all creeds and all types to work side by side for worthwhile things like this project. We hope to create a spirit of friendliness at the CCC camps and to make all who are engaged in this work feel that they are right at home. We want to bring the best influences to bear on the camp in our relation to its personnel." ¹²

Captain Hammer of CCC Company 1797 pointed out in response that the workers were civilians, subject to civil law, and represented a cross section of the youth of the Seneca community. He discussed the value of the camps in teaching useful employment, teaching men how to get along

⁷ George C. Adriance, <u>Courier-Tribune</u>, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, "Welcome Civilian Conservation Corps" Oct. 1, 1934

⁸ George C. Adriance, <u>Courier-Tribune</u>, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, "Second Camp To New Home." October 8, 1934.

⁹ George C. Adriance, Courier-Tribune, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, "Hope to Paint CCC buildings." October 8, 1934.

¹⁰ George C. Adriance, Courier-Tribune, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, "A Set-Back in Park Plan." November 5, 1934.

George C. Adriance, Courier-Tribune, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, CCC Notes. November 11, 1934.

¹² George C. Adriance, Courier-Tribune, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, "A Fine Spirit in Park Work." November 12, 1934.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 5

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail Seneca vicinity, Nemaha County, Kansas

with one another and how to work together. His hope, he said, was to have the Nemaha camps the best in the state. Superintendent Pennartz spoke of the difficult situation in building the dam because there was water-bearing gravel and sand which lie below the surface dirt. This meant that the workers would have to go down 28 feet to shut off the water to keep water in the lake, once they had it.¹³

There was an effort made to lower the lake level from the originally-planned depth of 20 feet to 15 feet so as not to take in as much land. As the county commissioners did not vote bonds enough to buy all the land required, the newspaper editor personally sold \$3,000 worth of cabin sites and deposited a certified check for that amount with the Nemaha County Treasurer. This money was used as a donation to the County in order to save the lake as originally conceived.¹⁴

CCC Companies 2735 and 1797

On Oct. 6, 1934, Company 2735 arrived at Lake Nemaha. On Oct. 16, 1934, Company 1797 arrived at the Lake Nemaha sight. These two companies' mission at Lake Nemaha SCS No 16 project was to construct a ½ mile long earthen dam impounding the water of the Nemaha River and forming Lake Nemaha. The first job, however, was to help finish the company buildings. In addition to the 25 regular camp buildings and with the cooperation of the local township board, the township hall was moved from its original sight 2 miles away to the campsite to be used for educational purposes. It was 28 feet by 22 feet in size. The work on the dam began in the fall of 1934. Good progress was made on the dam and reservoir area during the next 3 years, even though Company 2735 was gone part of the time. On November 19, 1935, CCC Company 2735 moved to Toronto, Kansas to finish the Woodson County Lake. They moved back to the Lake Nemaha site on September 1, 1936. On July 12, 1937, Company 2735 moved to a new ground at Marysville, Kansas and worked on project SCS-KS-30. By January 1, 1938 most of the work was completed on the Nemaha Lake project No. 16.

Clifford Muckey of Havensville shares that he helped move dirt out of the trenches to keep the river flowing while the big dam was being built. "Those were Depression days and the CCC was established to give American youth something to do and put money in pockets. The CCC wasn't in a hurry to do anything. And with no-one looking on, they could exercise artistic creativity with the dam guardrail pillars."¹⁵

Elmer Bud Keithly of Oneida, who is a retired KDOT supervisor for northeast Kansas, hauled rocks from the quarry near Corning to build the dam and guardrails. "They cut rock with a jack

¹³ Harlan Henderson, Topeka Capital-Journal, "CCC Boys Loyal To Reunion." Interview; September 22, 1994.

George C. Adriance, <u>Courier-Tribune</u>, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, "Citizens Must Aid." November 22, 1934.
 The Marysville Advocate, "Bridge No. 33, Nemaha County Structure is Classic", David Hacker, September 10, 1998.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 6

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail Seneca vicinity, Nemaha County, Kansas

hammer, chipped wedges, drilled holes and started laying the approach like a stone wall. It was just for looks," he said. 16

The work to build the dam included the use of mules to pull the dump wagons, but they were soon replaced by the dump trucks. A D-6 Caterpillar was used to pull a duck-foot packer to pack the dam as it was being built. The dump trucks hauled the dirt from the elevating grader to the dam. They were also used to haul limestone rock for use as riprap and also the rock used to build the rock guardrail on both sides of the road over the dam. The rock was hauled from a rock quarry south east of Corning, Kansas.

In addition to the 380-acre lake project, other facilities were constructed and included a shelter house, swimming area, shower facilities, and a harbor for fishing boats. Roads, trails, and outhouses were also constructed. The entire Lake Nemaha Park project covered 640 acres. After the project was finished it was turned over to Fish and Game Department for \$1.00 to be maintained and used by the public for fishing, camping and recreation. The lake was decommissioned in 1984 when silt dried up the lake and a flood took out the spillway at the bridge. The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association projected \$353,000 in 1998 for a shallow water wetlands area from 70 to 100 acres with upgraded shelters, a wildlife trail, and an improved drive through area. The improvement group seeks to preserve the 215 guardrail pillars for future generations to appreciate the craftsmanship of the Kansas young men of the 1930s.

Lake Nemaha Today

Lake Nemaha is currently a state wildlife area and is run by Kansas Wildlife & Parks. The park covers 705 acres and is used by many people in the Nemaha County area. Many people hunt at the old lakebed and the areas around it. There are hiking trails and two camping areas. There is even talk about partially refilling the lake with water. The lakebed is currently leased out to farmers for farming and the rest of the area is now timberland. The farmers that work that land must leave a couple of rows of crops for the wildlife in the area. The current spillway for the South Fork of the Big Nemaha River was built in 1986. Gabions, rock filled baskets, are used to prevent the river from scouring the banks under the bridge. This style of bank stabilization was state of the art when the bridge was built and is very unique in Kansas.

In April 2001, a Lake Nemaha Wetlands was proposed to create a habitat friendly to waterfowl and other wetland species. That kind of habitat is rare in this part of Kansas, according to a feasibility report on the project, prepared by BHE Environmental of Knoxville, Tennessee.

The lake was drained several times because of upstream flooding and silt problems. It was last drained

¹⁶ Thid.

¹⁷ Anita Heiman, Lake Nemaha Preservation, President, Interview – October 30, 2007.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 7

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail Seneca vicinity, Nemaha County, Kansas

after runoff from a heavy rainfall washed out the spillway. A concrete weir was then placed in the river channel to restrict flow in times of high water. The wetlands would be created by building a 6,057-foot compacted clay berm along the north side of existing river channel, retaining water from several tributary streams. The Nemaha River would not be impounded by the structure.

The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association took on a tremendous task in the restoration of the lake. This group organized fundraisers and planned a controlled outlet system, which facilitates management of water levels for proper plant community development and control. Volunteers worked at the lake site cutting brush and trees and mowing the grounds. Three contractors came with their heavy equipment to clean off and level a large area. About \$5,000 of volunteer machinery and labor restored the wetlands to achieve maximum biological output with an average depth of two feet, with one half of the surface area covered with vegetation. Slightly over eight acres of deepwater habitat suitable for fishing is included. The wetlands total 143.5 acres. The Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks manages the state-owned wetlands area. The dam guardrail pillars are within the right-of-way of Kansas Highway 63, which is owned by the Kansas Department of Transportation. Although, KDOT does not object to placing the pillars on the National Register of Historic Places, they do make it clear that the pillars may need to be relocated if significant improvements were to be made to Kansas Highway 63 in the future.

¹⁸ Oretha Ruetti, The Sabetha Herald, "Restoration of Nemaha Lake Park Underway," 2003.

¹⁹ Leroy Koehn, Area Engineer; Kansas Department of Transportation, District One - Area One, Letter, May 11, 2007.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 9 Page 6

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrails Seneca vicinity, Nemaha County, Kansas

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 10 & Photos Page 9

Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrails Seneca vicinity, Nemaha County, Kansas

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Section 23, Township 3, Range 12, East 1/2; Northeast Section 26, Township 3, Range 12. The nominated property includes only the guardrails located in the right-of-way along Highway 63 atop the Nemaha Lake Dam.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

SHPO staff recently surveyed the greater park and lake for additional extant resources associated with the CCC. The dam guardrails are being nominated individually because they are the best intact resources associated with the CCC at Lake Nemaha. The nominated property includes only the guardrails located in the right-of-way along Highway 63 atop the Lake Nemaha Dam.

PHOTOGRAPIC INFORMATION

Property: Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrails Location: Seneca vicinity, Nemaha Co., KS

Photographer: Sarah J. Martin

Date: October 30, 2007

Lake Dam and guardrails, facing N Photo 1:

View of east stone guardrail atop dam, facing S Photo 2: Typical stone post along west side of road, facing N

Photo 3:

Stone posts along west side of road, facing S Photo 4:

